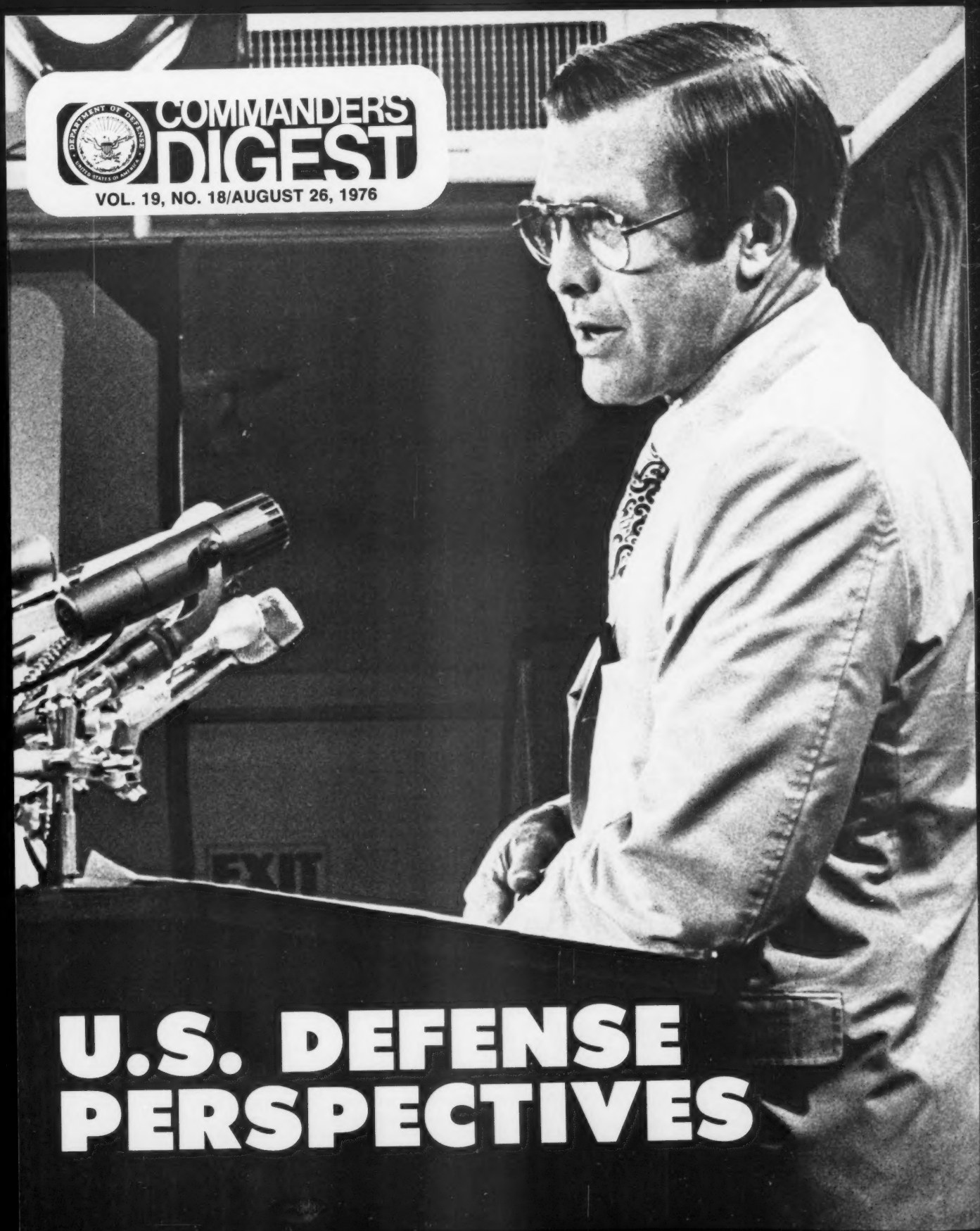
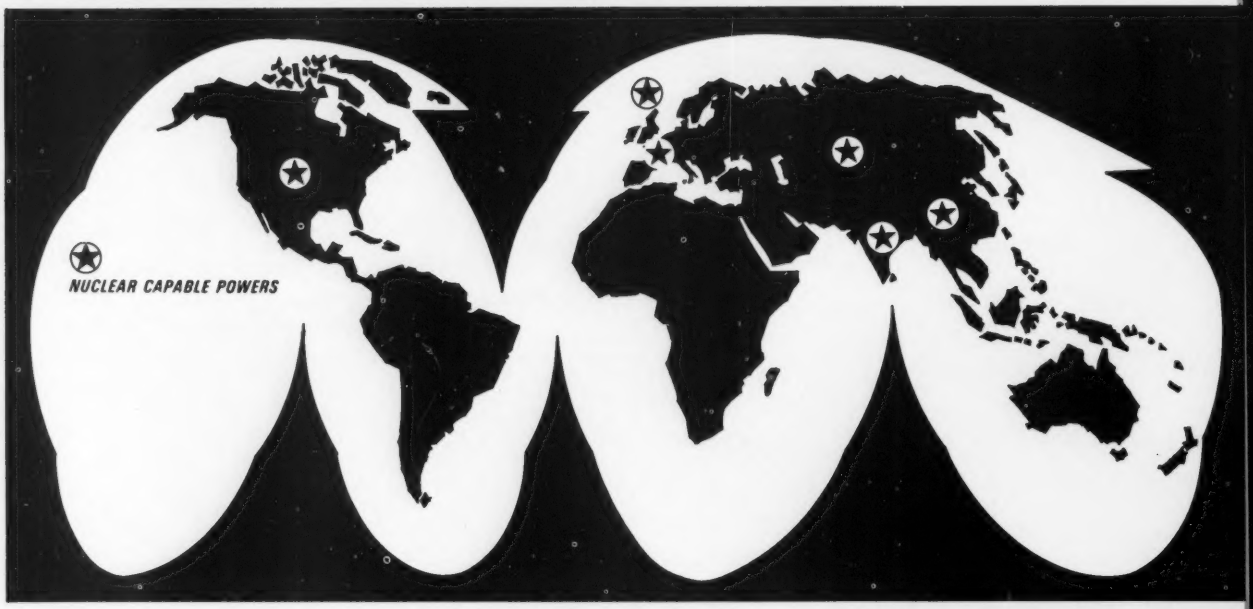
COMMANDERS DIGEST
VOL. 19, NO. 18/AUGUST 26, 1976



U.S. DEFENSE PERSPECTIVES

U.S. DEFENSE PERSPECTIVES



By DONALD H. RUMSFELD
Secretary of Defense

There is consensus that U.S. military capability and strength can be described as "sufficient"—today. That is, when compared to the Soviet Union, we have parity in some aspects of military power, marked superiority in some others, and a degree of inferiority in still others.

However, the trends of the past 10–15 years have been decidedly adverse quantitatively and qualitatively as well as with respect to the key military balances. While no one chart, statistic or trend can present the complete picture, a sweeping look at level of effort, resource allocation, procurement and research and development efforts, equipment production rates, force level trends, and shifts in relative capability does make it clear what has taken place.

The facts drive one to the clear conclusion that the United States must act now and in the future to reverse these adverse trends, by providing real increases for national security.

It is my conviction that the American people are not willing to accept a policy of inferiority.

Global Military Powers

To place U.S. national defense requirements in perspective in today's world, one fact must be emphasized above all others: there are but two global powers—the United States and the Soviet Union. These two nations do not share many economic interests. They differ on most political issues. They are fundamentally opposed in terms of basic principles.

Moreover, both are militarily strong. While there are other nations with significant military strength—and four other nations in the world with proven nuclear weapons capabilities—the Soviet Union and the United States dominate considerations of global power.

Both the Soviet Union and the United States have sufficient and diverse interests in the world, and enough power, to become involved in regional conflicts, whether in the Middle East, Europe, Asia, or Africa. It is for these reasons that our position relative to the Soviet Union stands at the forefront of our foreign policy, our security arrangements, and our military planning and posture around the world.

Indicators of Soviet Military Power

There are a number of accepted measures of military power. These measures—the allocation of national resources to the military establishment, the weight of investment effort in military-industrial activities, and the current order of battle or military capabilities—reveal a substantial growth in the Soviet Union's military power over the last 10–15 years. Certainly, there are aspects of military power where the Soviet Union has shown little improvement, but these are the rare exceptions.

When these measures are used as the basis for a comparison of U.S. and Soviet military power, the aggregate picture they form is clear. I will now cover the comparisons using these measures.

Defense Program Trends

While reductions in real terms have been going on in the United States, the Soviet Union has been moving steadily in an upward direction.

The intelligence community has worked at the task of estimating the magnitude of Soviet effort, and there remains some difference among analysts as to the absolute value of military efforts in their controlled economy. However, the latest estimate, completed in February 1976, shows that the constant 1977 dollar value of the resources allocated to Soviet national defense appears to have grown from 107 billion in 1965 to 144 billion in 1975, an average annual increase of at least 3 per cent.

Figure 1 depicts an estimate of Soviet program costs with comparable costs of U.S. defense programs. The U.S. defense budget has decreased in real terms (corrected for inflation) by more than one-third from the 1968 wartime peak. Today, in real terms (corrected for inflation), it is 14 per cent below the levels of the pre-war, early 1960s.

Soviet Defense Expenditures

Figure 2 portrays a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimate (May 1976) of actual Soviet expenditures in constant rubles (corrected for inflation) for FY 1970–75. The curve does not go back beyond 1970 because a Soviet price reform in the late 1960s introduced major discontinuities in the data base.

The recent CIA estimate states that Soviet expenditures for defense have increased every year since 1970. The average rate of growth in rubles during the 1970–75 period was 4–5 per cent, although annual growth rates varied.

Based on this data, this CIA estimate describes the burden of defense spending on the Soviet economy as being 11–13 per cent of their Gross National Product (GNP). The U.S. defense budget represents about 5¾ per cent of its GNP.

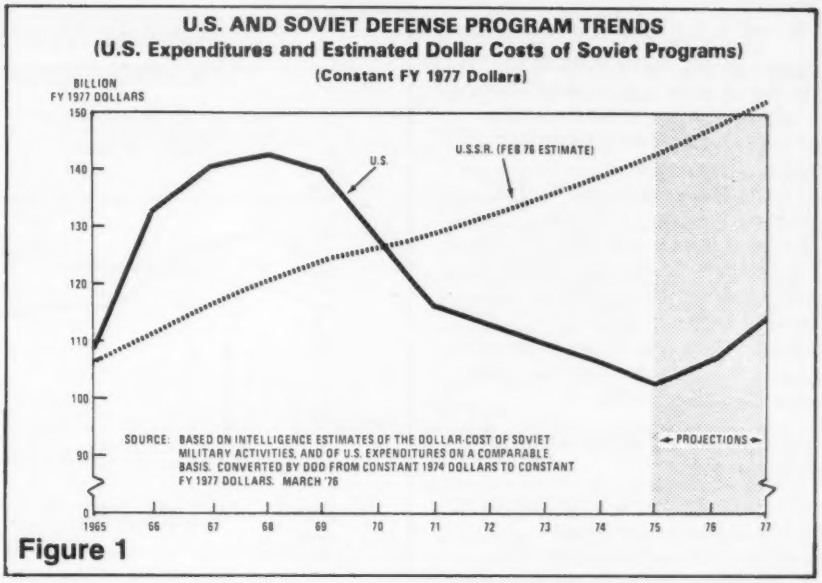


Figure 1

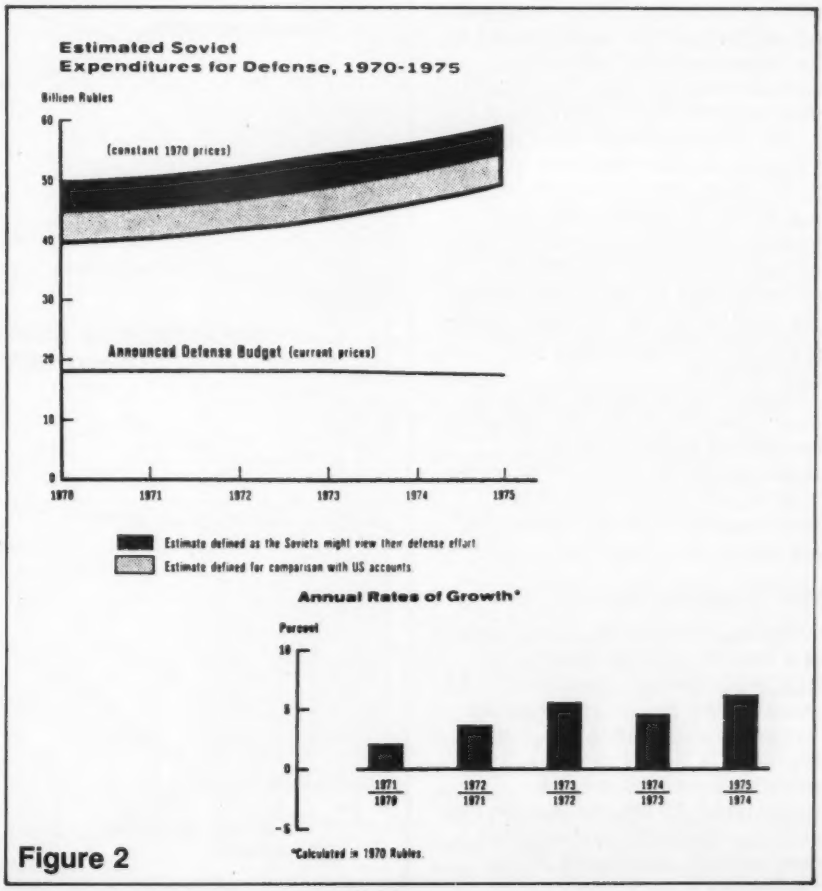


Figure 2

U.S.—Soviet Military Manpower

The Soviets have increased the number of men under arms (not including some 400,000 military security forces) from 3.4 to 4.4 million since 1964.

During the same period, U.S. uniformed military strength increased from a pre-war 1964 level of 2.7 million to a peak of 3.5 million during the war in Southeast Asia. The figure has now declined to 2.1 million. There are fewer Americans in uniform today than at any time since the fall of 1950.

Comparative Technological Investment

The Soviets have developed an industrial base which has quantitatively outproduced the United States in most categories of military hardware. Their investment in a large scientific base has led to the development of increasingly sophisticated systems. The weight of effort and the momentum which the Soviet Union has developed is clear.

Figure 3 shows that over the past 10–12 years, Soviet investment, in real terms, in development and procurement of new systems and production facilities has clearly exceeded that of the United States. The figure also displays aggregated data, and military research and development.

Figure 3 also reveals the long term commitment that the Soviets are making to a high level of technological progress, through the training and assignment of a workforce that has high technical skills.

New Systems Comparison

Figure 4 compares the number of new aircraft, missile system, and ship developments over the last 11 years. Owing to the uncertainties caused by intelligence lag, the estimates of Soviet systems that are new developments may be understated. As time passes we may discover additional systems that were actually developed during 1965–1975.

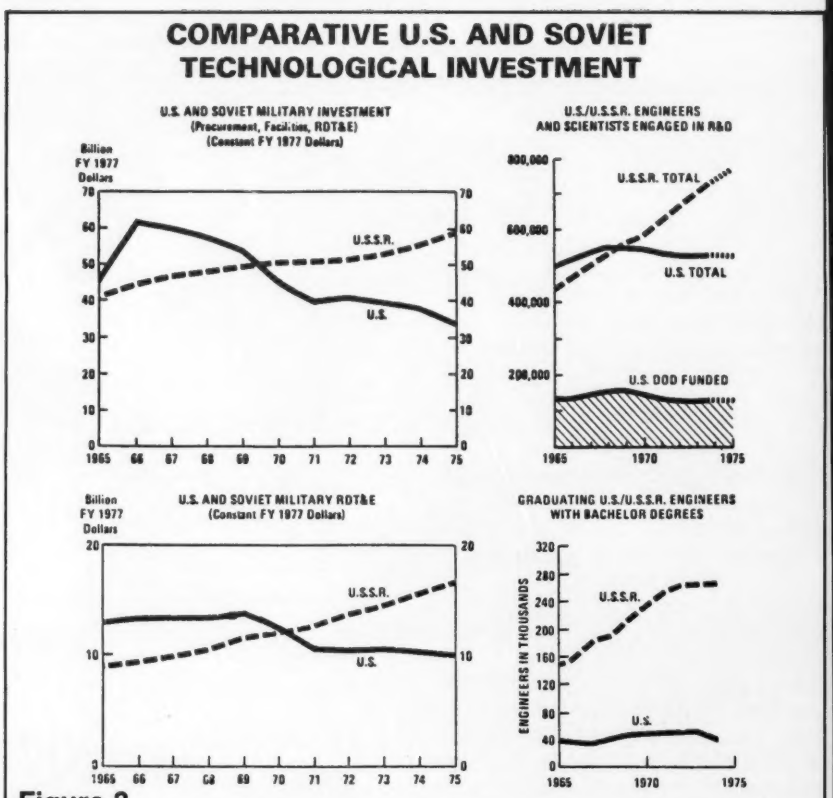
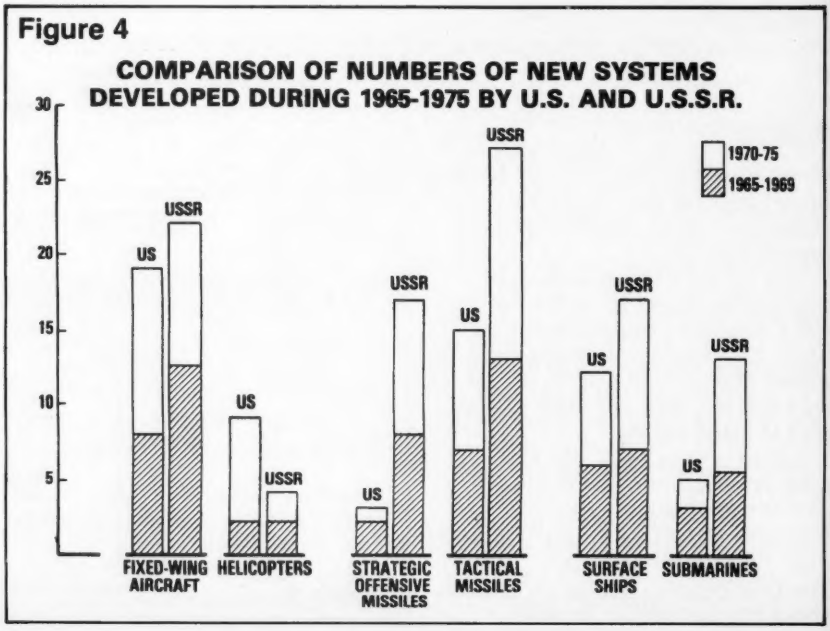

COMPARATIVE U.S. AND SOVIET TECHNOLOGICAL INVESTMENT
U.S. AND SOVIET MILITARY INVESTMENT (Procurement, Facilities, RDT&E) (Constant FY 1977 Dollars)
Billion FY 1977 Dollars
U.S.S.R.
U.S.
U.S./U.S.S.R. ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS ENGAGED IN R&D
U.S.S.R. TOTAL
U.S. TOTAL
U.S. DOD FUNDED
U.S. AND SOVIET MILITARY RDT&E (Constant FY 1977 Dollars)
GRADUATING U.S./U.S.S.R. ENGINEERS WITH BACHELOR DEGREES
ENGINEERS IN THOUSANDS

Figure 3



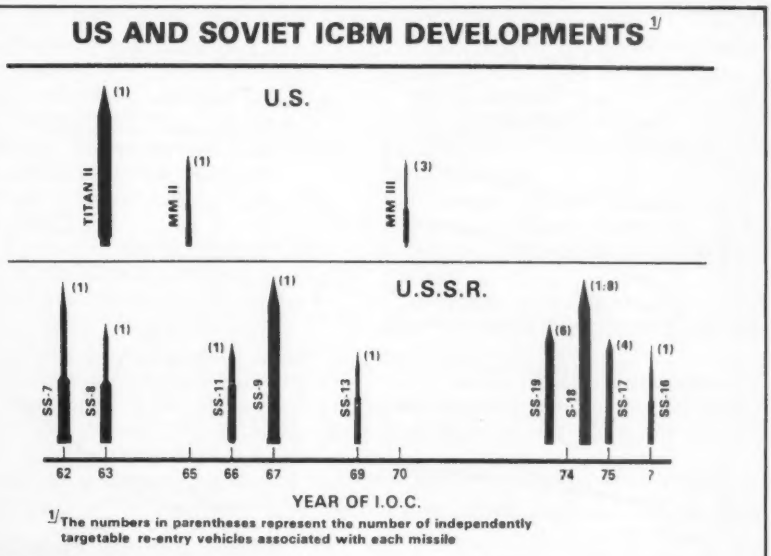


Figure 5

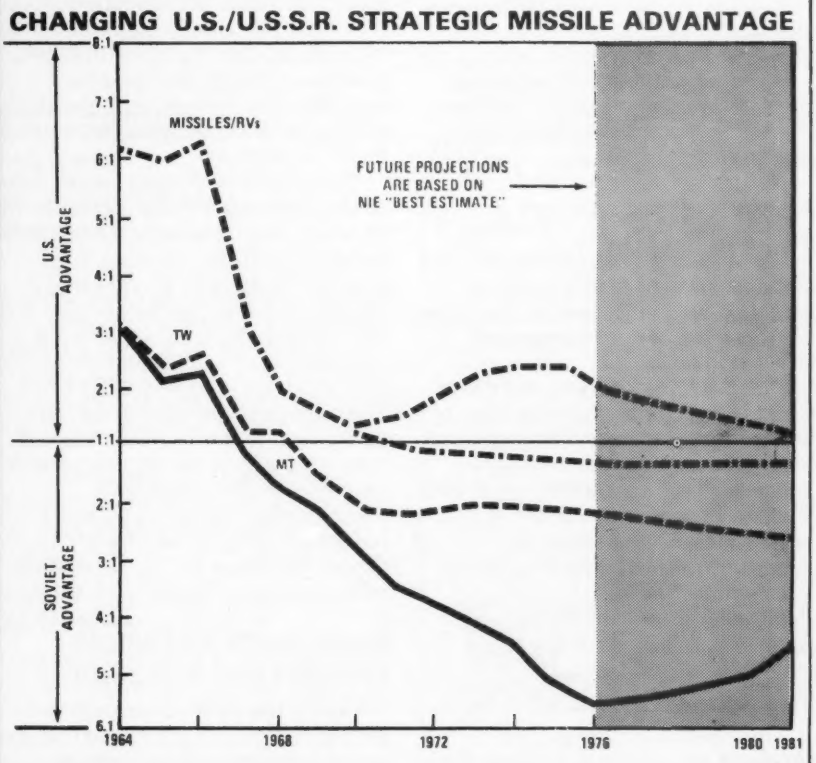


Figure 6

During the period indicated, the Soviets developed more new systems in five of the six categories, helicopters being the exception.

ICBM Developments

Figure 5 illustrates the emphasis the Soviet Union has placed on the modernization of its Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) force during the past 15 years. While the United States has developed only one new system since 1965, the Minuteman III, the Soviet Union has developed seven new ICBMs in the same time period.

More important than the numbers of new types of missiles is the fact that three of the Soviets' newest ICBMs, the SS-17, SS-18 and SS-19, are large throwweight multiple independently targetable reentry vehicled (MIRVed) ICBMs that could, by the early 1980s, possess a counterforce capability far in excess of that possessed by our current Minuteman force.

Changes in Strategic Nuclear Forces

The Soviets have increased from approximately 225 ICBMs in 1965 to some 1,600 today, having overtaken the United States in the late 1960s.

Soviet submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) have grown from 29 to more than 700, while the United States has been level at 656. In the bomber force, the United States maintains a lead. These comparisons do not address the evolving qualitative differences in the two forces.

Strategic Nuclear Force Mix

The strategic nuclear forces of the United States and Soviet Union, while roughly equivalent, are asymmetrical. The major asymmetries between the two forces are shown by comparing the distribution of warheads and megatonnage among delivery systems.

The United States relies much more heavily on its bomber force than does the Soviet Union. The

Soviets have put most of their emphasis on the development and deployment of ICBMs. Both countries reduced their initial reliance on bombers by the introduction of ICBMs and, subsequently, strengthened their overall deterrent by the introduction of SLBMs.

Strategic Missile Advantage/Disadvantage

Figure 6—which does not include strategic bomber forces, an area in which the United States has an advantage—shows that the strategic missile advantage shifted away from the United States in the late 1960's. Above the horizontal line which divides **Figure 6**, the advantage resides with the United States; below the line, it falls to the Soviet Union.

Taking Soviet and U.S. developments into consideration, we expect a continued Soviet advantage in throwweight and megatons, although the United States should retain a lead in numbers of warheads.

Projected Nuclear Inventories

From the standpoint of the total strategic nuclear inventory, including missiles (SLBMs and ICBMs) and bombers, projected trends indicate a U.S. lead in numbers of warheads, but the Soviet Union would maintain an advantage in megatons and throwweight. Calculations for a K factor, as defined by the formula in **Figure 7,** which some analysts equate with "lethality," show a rough equality between the United States and Soviet Union.

The illustrations in **Figure 7** are based on assumptions of 2,400 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDV) and 1,320 MIRVs as discussed in Vladivostok.

The Strategic Balance

Asymmetries that influence an assessment of the strategic balance today include the following:

U.S. advantages–

- A superior bomber force
- More MIRV launchers and deliverable warheads

PROJECTED U.S./U.S.S.R. STRATEGIC NUCLEAR INVENTORIES a/

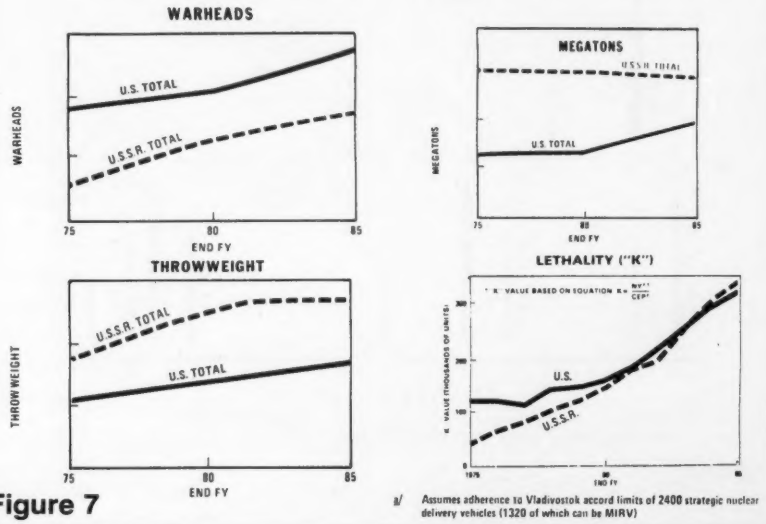


Figure 7

a/ Assumes adherence to Vladivostok accord limits of 2400 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (1320 of which can be MIRV)

- Superior ballistic missile guidance systems

Soviet Union advantages–

- Larger numbers of ballistic missiles with significantly greater destruction potential (throwweight and megatonnage).
- More air defense radars, surface-to-air missiles and air defense interceptors.

When all factors are considered, the net assessment is that parity in strategic nuclear forces exists today between the United States and Soviet Union.

However, the growing numbers and technological sophistication of Soviet strategic forces suggest that, unless countered, the strategic balance that exists today could shift in favor of the Soviet Union in the period ahead. The strategic programs proposed by President Ford—if passed by Congress—assure a strong deterrent in the years ahead.

Soviet Ground Force Weapon Advances

The Soviets for some time have stressed an offensive doctrine for a Blitzkrieg-type war. In the past decade they have made progress toward building a force which would implement that doctrine. Since the mid-1960s, they have introduced five new types of aircraft and provided their ground forces with a new generation of weapons in most major categories.

The weapons, in most cases, have been sophisticated new designs. For example, Soviet divisions have been equipped with as many as five different surface-to-air gun and missile systems, each designed with capabilities that overlap another system and use different methods to acquire, track and engage aircraft. Their armored personnel carrier is configured to allow their troops to fight from within the vehicle, and it mounts anti-tank weapons.

Major improvement in ground based air defense has freed the Soviet Air Force for an air support role.

Estimated Production of Ground Force Equipment

During the past 10 years, the United States has produced fewer of most major items of air-ground warfare equipment than has the Soviet Union. For example:

• Over the past decade the Soviets have consistently outproduced the United States in tanks, armored personnel carriers (APCs), and artillery. The recent decline in Soviet tank production is probably due to the retooling necessary for producing their new tank, the T-72.

• Soviet production of tactical aircraft and helicopters now exceeds U.S. levels. Much of their current production is comprised of reasonably sophisticated models.

• While the United States has recently trailed in the production of anti-tank missiles, U.S. systems are more sophisticated than the older generation Soviet Saggers and Swatters.

Relative Production Rates

Over the past five years, average Soviet production of major items of ground and tactical air (TACAIR) warfare equipment—tanks, APCs, artillery pieces, tactical aircraft, helicopters, and anti-tank guided missiles—is estimated to have exceeded quantitatively that of the United States—except with respect to helicopters.

Ground TACAIR Forces Military Equipment

Soviet tank inventories exceed those of the United States by roughly 4 to 1, and are increasing. The Soviets have 2.5 times as much artillery.

They have built modern, capable tactical aircraft which in numbers, but not quality, exceeds ours by 30 per cent.

In helicopters the United States maintains superiority, but the Soviets are now building helicopters in quantity.

Central European Balance—NATO/Warsaw Pact

Central European force postures and developments suggest that, unless counterbalanced by North Atlantic Treaty Organizations (NATO) force improvements, increasing Soviet firepower and mobility could begin to give the Warsaw Pact forces an unacceptable advantage.

Asymmetries that influence the assessment include the following

–NATO advantages:

• A defense mission with advantages of interior lines and familiar terrain.

• Superior tactical airpower.

• More anti-tank weapons, helicopters, and armored personnel carriers.

–Warsaw Pact Advantages:

• The initiative in choosing the time and nature of attack.

• More tanks and artillery pieces, and modern sophisticated battlefield air defense systems.

Naval Combatant Deliveries

Since 1965, the Soviets have added more than three times as many ships to their fleet as has the United States. They have emphasized smaller ships for coastal defense whereas the United States has emphasized large combatants for operations in distant ocean areas. The United States has added more tonnage to its fleet.

Figure 8 compares quantitatively, but not qualitatively, the United States and Soviet shipbuilding programs—submarines, minor combatants, major combatants (under and over 10,000 tons) and underway replenishment ships.

Characteristics/Changes in Naval Forces

A 1975 comparison of the number of ships and total tonnage of the two navies shows two asymmetries. First, the Soviets have more ships of smaller tonnage. This is consistent with their traditional view that the Navy is the seaward extension of the Red Army, and thus has been largely coastal in orientation.

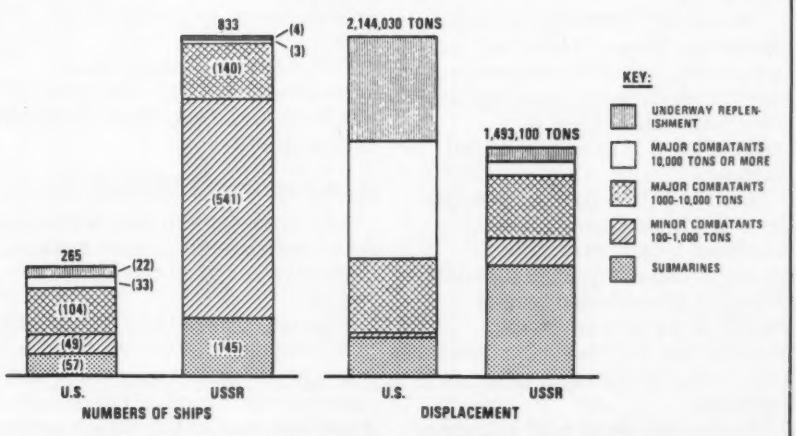
Second, the United States leads in displacement. We historically have built ships capable of deployment in distant waters.

While the numbers of ships in both navies has declined, the mix of ships in the Soviet Navy is changing toward larger, more capable ships, as they build air capable ships and cruisers.

When the contribution of principal allies on both sides are included, the numbers of ships tend to be equivalent, while the tonnage advantage for the United States and its allies is increased.

Figure 8

US / USSR NAVAL COMBATANT DELIVERIES 1/
1965 - 1975



1/ SUPPORT SHIPS OTHER THAN THOSE CAPABLE OF UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT ARE NOT INCLUDED.

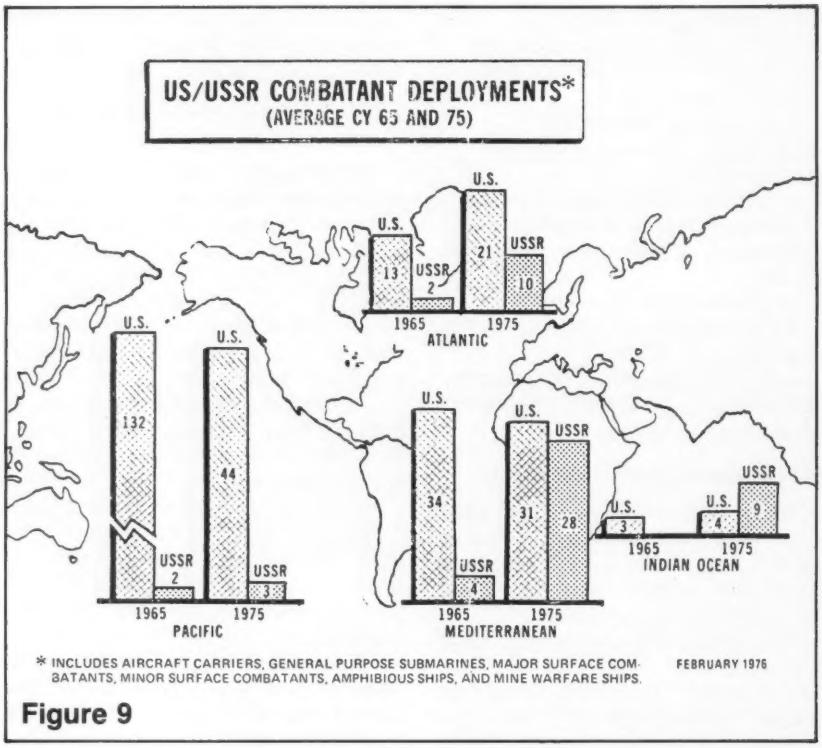


Figure 9

Changes in Naval Force Levels

The Soviet force has become numerically smaller with the retirement of large numbers of diesel submarines. However, the Soviets retain a 2.5 to 1 advantage in attack submarines.

The Soviets have 20 per cent greater numbers of major surface combatants—aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, and frigates. The United States has an unquestioned lead in sea-based aviation.

There is a marked asymmetry in the way the two navies have dispersed offensive, standoff weapons capability. U.S. standoff, offensive strength lies almost entirely in 13 aircraft carriers, whereas the Soviets have some 240 ships with standoff weapons capability.

The Soviets have built a force of amphibious lift ships which numerically exceed ours; however, U.S. assault capability and flexibility exceeds theirs.

Worldwide Deployment

As significant as the growth of the Soviet Navy is the worldwide deployment of Soviet ships on a routine basis, beginning in the early 1960s.

Recently, the Soviets have maintained a steady naval presence at a level about two-thirds that of the United States.

Geographical Distribution

The Soviet Union has adopted a naval deployment pattern quite dissimilar to that of the United States.

Figure 9 shows 1965 comparisons to the left and 1975 comparisons to the right, for each major ocean area. Naval contributions of the nations allied with the United States and the Soviet Union are not included in these comparisons.

Current Maritime Balance

The U.S. Navy has operated successfully at sea for many years in the sea control and projection missions. Shipbuilding and research and development programs as well as exercises have long been directed toward operations on the world oceans. On the other hand, the Soviets had not operated extensively at sea between the time of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 and the Okean-1970 exercise. Soviet ships and submarines have improved rapidly in capability during the past decade, but the Soviet Union is still behind in overall technology.

Overall, the U.S. Navy currently maintains a margin of superiority in carrying out its missions of protecting our sea lines of communication to our allies, projecting power ashore at great distances from the United States, and maintaining a consistent presence in the vital ocean areas of the world. However, the Soviet Navy's ability to counter U.S. force is increasingly more convincing, and, at the same time, the Soviet Navy is building a force clearly capable of sea control and power projection ashore in ocean areas nearest the Soviet Union.

Evolution of Soviet Power

When one considers the Strategic Nuclear, Naval, and Central European Front Balances together, it is clear that significant changes in Soviet capabilities have occurred in the past 15 years. The Soviets have come from the unsophisticated, continentally confined, armed forces of the post-World War II days to clear military superpower status in the 1970s.

There is growing momentum in Soviet military programs and in the emerging pattern of the projection of Soviet power.

U.S. Defense Budget Trends

The U.S. defense budget has decreased in real terms (corrected for inflation) by more than one-third from the 1968 wartime peak. Today,

in real terms (corrected for inflation), it is 14 per cent below the levels of the prewar early 1960s.

Trends in **Figure 10** are shown in terms of Total Obligational Authority (TOA). The broken line shows total TOA (in constant FY 77 dollars); the thick line labeled "baseline" shows the trend of resources devoted to military capability (excluding Southeast Asia war costs, retired pay, and foreign military sales); and the lower curve shows the progression of defense budgets as they appeared in current dollars (not corrected for inflation).

Shares of the U.S. Budget

U.S. defense spending today is about 25 per cent of the total Federal budget—the lowest share since FY 1940, shortly before Pearl Harbor—having dropped from 43 per cent in prewar 1964.

As shown in **Figure 11**, benefit payments to individuals and grants have increased from a 30 per cent share of the Federal budget to more than 55 per cent during the same period.

U.S. Defense Budget Totals

It is clear to those who study the military balance that, if the United States is to contribute to peace and stability in the world and not slip into a position of inferiority, the adverse budget trends of the past 10–15 years must be promptly arrested.

Figure 12 shows where the FY 1977 budget—with which we are attempting to check these adverse trends by stopping the downtrend (in real terms) in U.S. defense spending—stands with respect to budgets over past years. The top three lines in **Figure 12** display data, with prewar FY 1964 for reference, in terms of current or "then year" dollars (not corrected for inflation). The bottom section of the chart presents the same data in real terms . . . constant FY 1977 dollars (corrected for inflation).

Economies and Restraints

While the President's budget proposes improvements in force modernization and readiness, it also

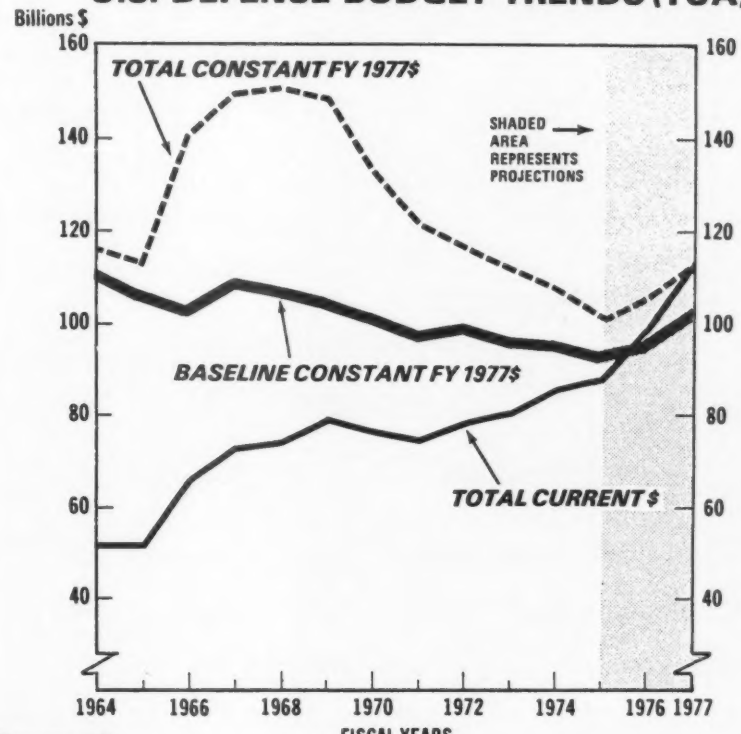


Figure 10

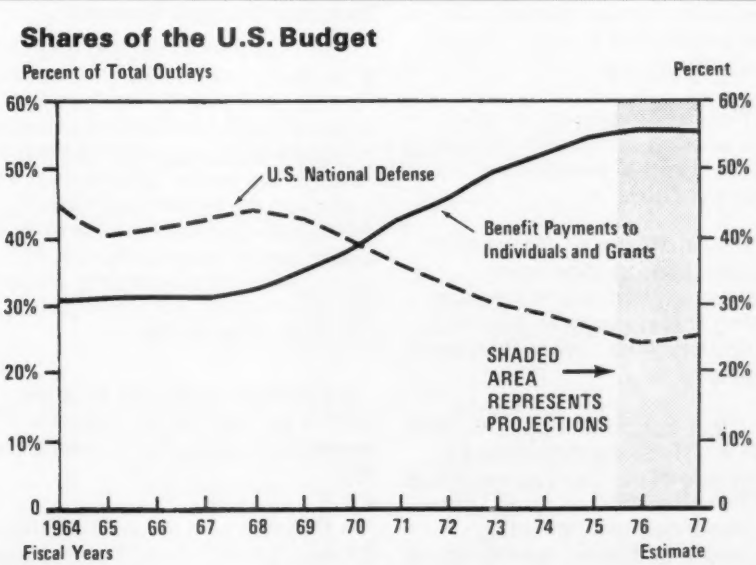


Figure 11

DEFENSE BUDGET TOTALS

($ IN BILLIONS)

CURRENT DOLLARS	FY 1964 ACTUAL	FY 1974 ACTUAL	FY 1975 ACTUAL	FY 1976 ESTIMATE	FY 1977 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST	PROPOSED INCREASE FY 1976-77
Total Obligational Authority (TOA)	50.7	85.1	87.9	98.0	114.2	16.2
Budget Authority (BA)	50.7	88.9	91.5	98.8	113.7	14.9
Outlays	50.8	78.4	86.0	90.5	100.4	9.9
CONSTANT FY 1977 DOLLARS						
Total Obligational Authority (TOA)	115.4	107.3	100.7	105.0	114.2	9.2
Budget Authority (BA)	115.5	112.6	104.8	105.9	113.7	7.8
Outlays	113.8	101.7	99.1	97.4	100.4	3.0

Figure 12

proposes to reduce spending on lower priority items in the following ways: **(Figure 13)**

- Restraining personnel costs while working to maintain the quality and professional standards of the All Volunteer Force.

- Instituting further efficiencies including base realignments, headquarters reductions, reduced training costs, stockpile level adjustments, and civilian manpower reductions.

- These restraints add up to $3.5 to $5.4 billion, depending on the magnitude of the pay cap achieved.

If Congress fails to approve the recommended belt-tightening measures, additional appropriations will be required to avoid unacceptable force reductions.

Defense Budget Summary

The President proposed that DoD outlays increase by $3.0 billion from FY 1976 to FY 1977—up from $97.4 billion to $100.4 billion in real terms. However, even if Congress were to approve the entire amount, the portion of the Nation's economic resources allocated to defense would remain historically low, in some cases the lowest level in over a quarter of a century. For example, in FY 1976: **(Figure 14)**

- Defense represents 24.3 per cent of the Federal Budget, the lowest level since prior to the Korean War.

- Defense as a per cent of GNP at 5.7 per cent in FY 1976 represents the lowest share since prior to the Korean War.

- Defense employment (including military, civilian and defense industry) represents 4.8 per cent of the labor force, the lowest level since prior to Pearl Harbor.

- In terms of net public spending (Federal and state and local) defense represents 16.4 per cent of the total, also the lowest relative share since prior to Pearl Harbor.

U.S. Federal Outlay Pattern

Our Nation's non-defense spending can no longer be funded out of the defense budget. Today, non-defense expenditures are nearly three times those of defense. **(Figure 15)**

In the extreme:

- A 10 per cent increase in non-defense spending, taken from the DoD budget, would mean a crippling 30 per cent cut.

- A 33 per cent increase in

ECONOMIES AND RESTRAINTS IN FY 1977 U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET

($ in Billions)

— CUTBACKS IN EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COSTS, FY 1976-77	$ .9
— PAY RAISE ASSUMPTIONS GS/MILITARY PAY RAISE CAP, NEW/EXISTING GS GUIDELINES	.8/2.6
— COMMISSARIES AND RETIRED PAY "KICKER"	.2
— MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION	.9
SUBTOTAL	2.8/4.6
— STOCKPILE ITEMS	.7/.8
TOTAL	$ 3.5/5.4

Figure 13

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BUDGET

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	FY 1964 ACTUAL	FY 1974 ACTUAL	FY 1975 ACTUAL	FY 1976 ESTIMATE
DOD/MAP as Percentage:				
Federal Budget (Outlays)	42.8%	29.2%	26.5%	24.3%
Gross National Product	8.3%	5.8%	6.0%	5.7%
Labor Force	7.9%	5.2%	5.0%	4.8%
Net Public Spending	28.1%	17.4%	17.3%	16.4%

Figure 14

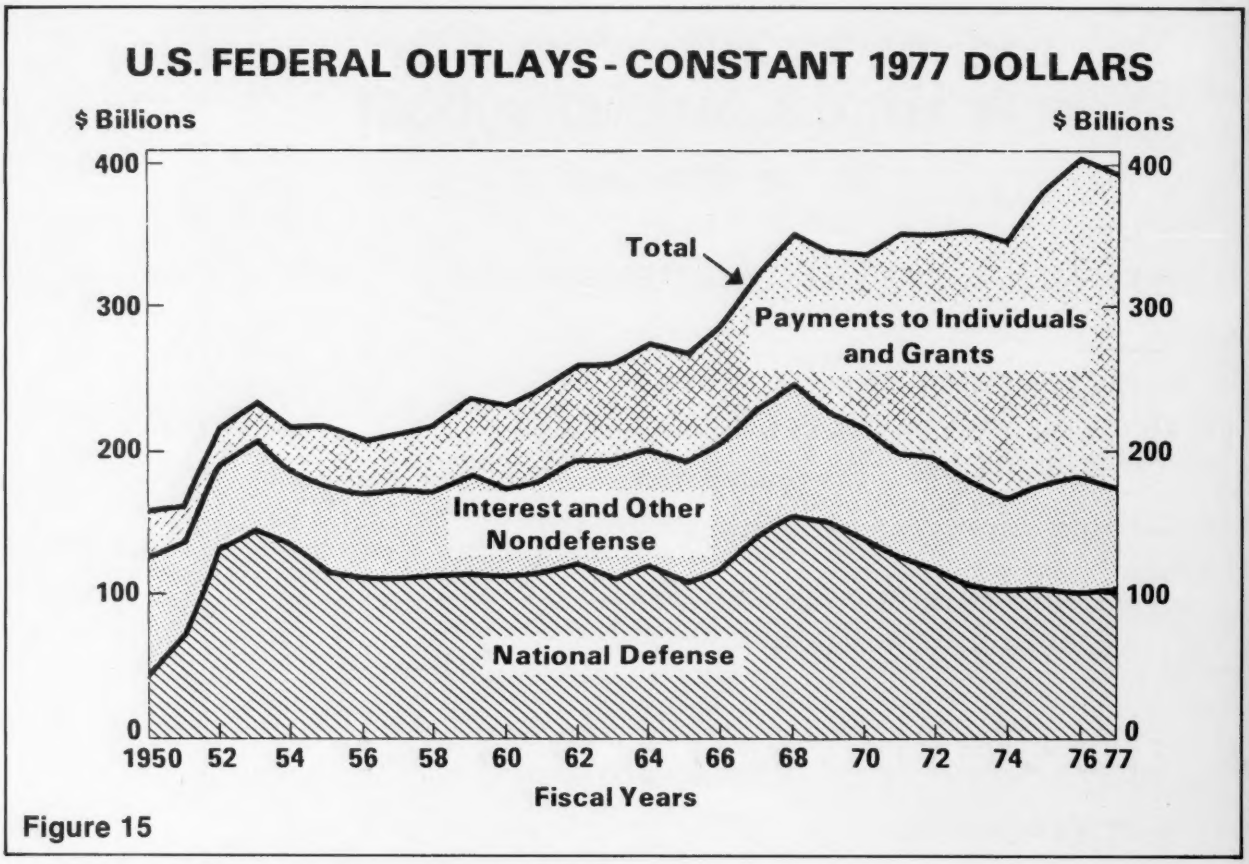


Figure 15

non-defense spending, funded from Defense spending, would wipe out the Defense establishment altogether.

Conclusion

The military capabilities of the two global powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—are today roughly equivalent.

To permit the adverse trends of the past 10–15 years to continue would amount to a conscious decision by the people of the United States, represented by their U.S. Representatives and Senators in the U.S. Congress, to allow the United States to become militarily inferior to the Soviet Union.

If the United States were to make a decision which allowed this Nation to slip to a position of military inferiority, we would soon be living in an unstable world—a world fundamentally different and more dangerous than the one we have known during our lifetimes.

It would be a decision as dangerous as the decision by the democracies prior to World War II—— not to arm and prepare as Hitler was mobilizing. It would be worse, because we are the Nation that turned the tide and prevented a victory by Fascism, and today there is no nation to do that for us.

It is for us to do—we must do it. I believe we shall.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

Vol. 19, No. 18, August 26, 1976

A publication of the Department of Defense to provide official and professional information to commanders and key personnel on matters related to Defense policies, programs and interests, and to create better understanding and teamwork within the Department of Defense.

Published bi-weekly by the American Forces Press Service, 1117 N. 19th St., Arlington, Va. 22209, a unified activity of the Office of Information for the Armed Forces, OASD (PA). Reproduction of content is authorized.

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